



National Park Service
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Alaska National Parks News Release

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Alaska's National Park Visitation Up in 2011

Preliminary counts show that 2011 brought a modest increase in visitation to Alaska's national parks.

The Alaska Region saw about 2.32 million recreational visits over the past 12 months, up 50,000 (or about 2 percent) from the 2.27 million in 2010. Final numbers for this calendar year will be available in the spring.

Kenai Fjords National Park, headquartered in Seward, and Denali National Park had the largest increases for 2011. Those two parks, along with Glacier Bay, Klondike Gold Rush and Sitka national parks, account for more than 2.17 million visits, or about 90 percent of visits to all NPS units in the state. Visitation to those parks, particularly the three in Southeast Alaska, is closely tied to the number of cruise ship passengers.

Alaska's national parks are open all year, although visitation patterns at this time of year generally change to skiing, dog mushing and similar pursuits.

At Kenai Fjords NP, the Exit Glacier area is a popular destination in winter. Snowmachines may be used in certain areas and a public use cabin is available. Information on the area is available at <http://www.nps.gov/kefj/planyourvisit/winter-activities.htm>

At Denali NP, the Murie Science and Learning Center serves as the winter visitor center. Skiers and dog mushers often use the park road corridor to access the interior of the park, and snowmachine use for traditional activities is allowed in certain areas. Further information on all activities is available at <http://www.nps.gov/dena/planyourvisit/winter-activities.htm> Denali also helps host Winterfest, a three-day festival on February 24-6, 2012: <http://www.nps.gov/dena/planyourvisit/winterfest.htm>

Visitation to Alaska's national parks over the past 10 years has ranged from a low of 2.15 million in 2002 to a high of 2.63 million in 2007. A database showing visitation to all of America's national parks is available at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/stats/index.cfm>

